

served by the nurse, that the urine, when thrown out from the vessel in the night, emitted a light, or "flashed," as her expression was.

On examination, there was found a slough over the sacrum, and about the lower part of the back, a considerable degree of putrefaction, the muscles of the back being dark and very soft. The spine was opened from the last lumbar vertebra to about the upper dorsal, and the spinal marrow having been removed and carefully examined, it was thought that the gray substance in the centre of the lateral columns was somewhat softened; but the fact was very doubtful; otherwise, this organ and its membranes were perfectly healthy. The head was not examined. The os uteri and cervix were destroyed by deep ulceration, and there was an opening through into the cavity of the bladder, an inch or more in diameter, but without any appearance of malignant deposit. The kidneys were unusually white. Excepting the mammillary processes, and just below the one on the left side, the cellular membrane was of a grayish colour, and somewhat condensed. The other organs of the abdomen and thorax were healthy.

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ART. VI.—*Case of Compound Fracture of the Skull, with escape of Cerebral substance, ending in Recovery.* Reported by ROBERT P. HARRIS, M. D., Resident Physician to the Pennsylvania Hospital.

PATRICK McCORMICK, aged 26 years, a native of Ireland, of intemperate habits, was admitted into the Pennsylvania Hospital, as a "Recent Accident," on the 6th day of June, 1846. He was driving a horse-cart in a standing position, and being somewhat unsteady from the effects of drink, was thrown out by the sudden stoppage of his horse at a crossing of the streets. In his fall his head struck the curbstone, producing a compound fracture of the skull, and his body fell upon the pavement of the street, producing a fracture of the right thigh.

Upon his entry into the house, I examined his injuries, and found upon shaving off the hair from the right side of his head, that there was a long incised wound of the scalp, extending in a direction from the top of the ear, to the top of the forehead. This wound was about three inches in length, and communicated with a very extensive fracture, extending in the same direction, but much longer (6 or 7 inches). Upon examining this wound by means of the forefinger, I removed a small portion of brain about the size of a large bean; and I learned from the man's friends, that a much larger quantity was found upon the stone where his head struck in the fall.

Besides the large wound, there was one much smaller, about a quarter

of an inch in length, situated at the top of the forehead above the right eye. This wound communicated with the anterior extremity of the fracture.

The patient, at the time of his entry, was insensible to everything that was going on around him; the pupils of his eyes were contracted, and insensible to changes of light; his pulse was slow and feeble, (60 per minute;) he had entire paralysis of the left arm and leg; and his mouth was drawn to the right side.

Upon a consultation of the attending surgeons, it was thought advisable not to make any attempt to replace the fragments of bone, believing that there would be more danger from doing so, by its stopping the exit for the discharges, than there would be from allowing them to remain in their displaced condition.

The wounds were therefore covered merely with patent lint, and the head surrounded loosely with a bandage. The thigh, which was fractured obliquely about four inches above the knee, was set and placed in Desault's apparatus.

*June 7th, (morning.)* I found to my surprise upon entering the ward, that the paralysis of the patient had disappeared except in the face; and that his consciousness had returned. So that he was using a fan to keep off the flies from his head, with the arm that had been completely paralyzed the night before. His pulse had increased to 75 beats per minute; and his pupils had become entirely sensible, dilating and contracting naturally. He was able to tell upon inquiry all about his accident, and how it happened.

*Afternoon.* About 4 o'clock, P. M., the patient showed some signs of delirium. This gradually increased, and continued through the night. It was manifested by talking in a low muttering tone, and using words without any connection. Upon calling him by name in a loud tone of voice, he could be aroused for a short time, so as to answer questions correctly, but immediately relapsed into his previous condition. Directed four cut cups to be applied to the back of his neck.

*8th.* Symptoms still worse; pulse slow and very feeble; constant delirium; jactitation, and picking of the bed-clothes. His condition continued throughout the day without material change. When the lint was removed in dressing the wounds of the scalp, a large quantity of cerebral matter escaped. Directed a tablespoonful of the following mixture to be taken every two hours, viz.: R.—*Liquor potassæ citratis, f $\frac{3}{4}$  viij; antimonii et potassæ tart. gr. i. M. Fiat mistura.* Allowed barley water as a nutritious drink.

*9th.* Symptoms worse than yesterday; delirium greatly increased; pupils much contracted and insensible. On account of his delirium it was found necessary to bandage his hands fast to the sides of the bed to prevent him from removing the dressings from his head and thigh. A flax-

seed poultice was substituted for the lint in dressing his head, and as usual a portion of brain escaped upon the removal of the lint. Directed to take hydrarg. chlorid. mit. grs. x, as a purge, and to repeat the cut cups to the back of the neck.

10th. Still delirious; may be aroused so as to give sensible answers to questions, but immediately after relapses into stupor, and snores as if asleep, keeping his eyes shut. Pulse 96; pupils both dilated and partially sensible to light.

At 8 o'clock in the evening he was seized with rigors, after which he had a convulsion; during the night he had four more convulsions.

11th. Had several spasms to-day; has strabismus of right eye; answers questions when aroused; complains of thirst.

12th. Quite sensible to-day, much more so than at any time previous; slept well during the night. Complained of pain in the head, which was very much relieved by removing the bandage and poultice, and allowing the discharge to escape which seemed to have produced some compression of the brain.

13th. Not so sensible as yesterday; still has some headache; became more sensible after removing the dressings; pulse 80. Directed four cut cups to be applied to the back of his neck.

14th. Quite sensible to-day; pulse 96. The discharge from the wounds is diminishing, and has changed its character from that of softened cerebral matter to a thin puriform, yellowish fluid, with small portions of cerebral substance floating in it.

From this date there is nothing in the history of the case worthy of a daily record. The improvements from day to day were but slight, and I shall therefore give merely a record of those days in which there were any important changes.

The fracture of the thigh was very difficult to treat on account of the delirium of the patient; and we were obliged after two weeks to remove the apparatus of Desault, and substitute binders' board splints, so that the patient could lie on his side, to prevent sloughing of the parts over the sacrum, and posterior spinous processes of the ilia, which were becoming red from pressure. This of course entirely prevented any effort for the extension of the limb; it therefore became shortened more than an inch. It was, however, kept very straight, and will still be a very useful limb by the aid of a high-heeled shoe.

28th. Complained very much of pain in the head; had been vomiting several times; and said he could scarcely see any. Upon loosing the bandage from his head he said he felt better, and in about an hour he entirely recovered from its effects.

July 13th. Complained of much headache whenever he attempted to lie down, so that he was not able to sleep, and was forced to sit up in bed.

Directed two cut and four dry cups to the back of his neck, after which he was relieved.

*14th.* Was attacked with diarrhoea which prevailed in the ward at the time. Directed emplast. vesicat. four by five to be applied to the abdomen. Infus. krameria oj per diem as a drink, and a diet composed of castillon powder boiled in milk. This complaint lasted a week, after which his diet was increased until he was able to eat meat, &c., as before.

About this time cicatrization of the wounds commenced. The discharge ceased entirely about the 25th of the month.

*August 1st.* Had another attack of pain in the head, dimness of vision, and sickness of stomach, which was relieved by the application of two cuts and four dry cups to the back of his neck.

The strabismus of the right eye continued longer than any of the other symptoms of paralysis. It was not perceptible after the first of July. The paralysis of the muscles of the face disappeared soon after sensibility of the mind returned. The sight of the right eye, which was at first nearly destroyed, has gradually returned, so that it is now nearly as good as the other.

*September 7th.* Left the hospital cured; has grown quite fat; and as far as we can judge, is in as full possession of all his mental faculties as he was before the accident. His right eye still becomes dimmed, and his head aches when anything is bound tightly around his head. The wounds have entirely healed, and he can walk without crutches. There is a ridge of bone lifting up the skin on the top of the head about half an inch in height; and there is a soft spot where the anterior wound was, about the size of a quarter dollar, which feels as if the skull was depressed, or was wanting there; it gives him pain to press upon it.

*December 4th.* I heard to-day, that when he left the hospital, he attempted to follow his previous business, that of hauling bricks; but the noise of the bricks in the cart, and the stooping required in loading them, occasioned so much pain in his head, that he was obliged to discontinue it. He has since, however, been enabled to resume the occupation, and now works without any inconvenience, and says he feels as well as he did before the accident.

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ART. VII.—*Contributions to Pathology; being a Report of Fatal Cases, taken from the Records of the U. S. Naval Hospital, New York.* By W. S. W. RUSCHENBERGER, M. D., Surgeon U. S. Navy.

CASE I. *Erysipelas.*—James Wicketts, seaman, ætat. 78, was appointed in September, 1843, an assistant gate-keeper, as a reward for long service in the navy. He was a stout, short man, of florid complexion, weighing